



California Postsecondary Education Commission

770 L Street, Suite 1160 • Sacramento, California 95814
www.cpec.ca.gov • (916) 445-1000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Karen Humphrey, CPEC
khumphrey@cpec.ca.gov • (916) 445-1000

Linda Schneider, UC Berkeley
lindas@berkeley.edu • (510) 643-8980

Grant presentation ceremony Friday, October 24, 2008, 9:30 a.m.
Franklin Elementary School
915 Foothill Boulevard, Oakland, California

UC Berkeley – Oakland Unified School District partnership receives \$960,143 grant to address achievement gap

SACRAMENTO — October 21, 2008 — The University of California, Berkeley, in partnership with the Oakland Unified School District, has won funding for a new professional development project to help improve elementary school teaching in the core content area of science. The partnership has been awarded a four-year grant of \$960,143 by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC).

The Advancing Collaboration for Equity in Science (ACES) project will serve teachers at Franklin Elementary School and Grass Valley Elementary School, two high-need schools in the Oakland Unified School District. More than 50 teachers will improve their science knowledge and teaching skills, benefiting students. The project will also develop teacher leaders who will administer professional learning communities on the two campuses. The grant is part of the federal Improving Teacher Quality Program, funded through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, to provide high-quality professional development.

Over the past two decades, the Commission has awarded more than 200 grants totaling \$110 million to improve teacher quality. The 2008 grants, totaling \$5.8 million, address California's achievement gap based on race, ethnicity, or language. The grants improve classroom strategies in core subjects. The grants require rigorous evaluation to demonstrate how professional development affects student achievement.

“While the professional development provided by the grants is vital, the evaluation requirement is especially important,” the Commission’s Executive Director Murray J. Haberman said. “Being required to demonstrate the impact of professional development on student success, not just on teacher practice, supports the Commission’s commitment to accountability in educational programs.”

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Commission Chair Olivia K. Singh said, “The grant plays an important role in making sure every student has the opportunity to learn from a highly qualified teacher. The teachers who participate will learn new techniques to address the needs of students and help them become lifelong learners.”

More information may be found online at <http://www.cpec.ca.gov/federalprograms/teacherquality.asp>.

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The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. The Commission's primary focus is to ensure that the state's educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities.